

A Discription of the PAINTING of the THEATER IN OXFORD.

IN Imitation of the Antient Theaters of the Greeks and Romans, which were too large to be covered with Lead or Tyle, this is supposed to be open: and as they stretched a Cordage from Pilaster to Pilaster, upon which they strained a covering of Cloth, to protect the people from the injuries of the weather; so here is a Cord-Moulding gilded, that reaches cross and cross the House both in length and breadth, which supporteth a great Red Drapery, supposed to have covered the Roof, but now furled up by the Genii round about the House towards the Walls, which discovereth the open air, and maketh way for the descent of the Arts and Sciences, that are congregated together in a Circle of Clouds, to whose Assembly Truth descends as being solicited and implored by the most of them. For joy of which Festival the other Genii sport about the clouds, with their Festoons of Flowers and Laurels, and perpare their Garlands of Lawrels and Roses, viz. Honor and Pleasure, for the great Lovers and Studiers of those Arts. And that the Assembly may be perfectly happy, their great Enemies and Disturbers, Envy, Rapine, and Brutality, are by the Genii of their opposite Virtues, viz. Prudence, Fortitude, and Eloquence driven from the Society, and tumbled down head long from the clouds.

The report of the Assembly of the one, and the Expulsion of the other, is proclaimed through the open and serene Air by some other of the Genii, that blowing their Antick Trumpets, divide themselves into the several Quarters of the world.

This in Gross.

But the Circle of Figures consists principally of Theology, with her Book of seven Seals, imploring the assistance of Truth for the unfolding of it.

On her left side is the Mosaical Law, veiled with the Tables of Stone, to which she points with her Iron Rod.

On her right hand is the Gospel, with the Cross and Chalice.

In the same Division, over the Mosaical Law, is History holding up her Pen, as dedicating it to Truth, and an attending Genius with several Fragments of Old writing, from which she collected her History into her Book.

On the other side of the Gospel, is Divine Poesy, with her Harp of David's fashion.

On the same side of the Circle, opposite to Theology, are Mathematick Sciences in several squares (depending on demonstration as the other on Faith) As Astronomy with the Celestial Globe, Geography with the Terrestrial, Geometry with her Square and Plumb-line, Optick with her Perspective-glass; Also Arithmetick, Architecture, Perspective, &c.

In another square, on the West side of the Circle, is Law, with her Ruling Scepter, accompanied with Records on the one side, on the other with Rhetorick, by which is an attending Genius, with the Scales of Justice, and a Figure with a Palm-branch, the Emblem of Reward for virtuous Actions, And the Roman Fasces, the Marks of Power and Punishment.

On that side the Circle, opposite to Law, is Physick, with the Knotty Staff of Esculapius, with a Serpent winding about it. The Herbalist imploring the assistance of Truth for the right understanding of her Plants. The Chymist with a Bolt-head in his hand. The Chyrurgeon as preparing herself to finish the dissecting of an head, which hath the Brain already opened, & is held before her by one of the Genii. In other places, where room can best be had to make the composition graceful, is Logick in a posture of arguing. In the Triangle on the left hand of the Law, is Musick, with her paper of Musick-notes on her Knee, with a Genius by her playing on a Flute, being the Emblem of the most ancient Musick.

Dramatick Poetry with a Vizard, representing Comedy, a bloody Dagger for Tragedy, the Red Pipe for Pastoral.

Printing with a Box of Letters by on hand, and a Press ready set in the other, &c. by her several Sheets hanging as a drying.

These & several other Sheets compass the Circle.

In the midst of which, as descending from above, is the figure of Truth sitting on a Cloud; in one hand a Palm-branch, the Emblem of Victory, in the other the Sun, whose Brightness enlightens all the Circle with Figures, and is so bright, that it something hides the face of her self to us that are below.

Over the Entrance of the Front of the Theater are Three Figures tumbling down; as Envy with her Snaky hairs, Squint eyes, Haggs breast, Pale venomous Complexion, Strong, but ugly Limbs, and Riveling skin, frightened from above by the sight of Pallas her Shield with the Gorgon's head in it, against which shee would oppose the biggest of her Snakes, but her fall is so precipitous that she hath no command of her Armes.

Then Rapine with her Fiery eyes, Grinning teeth, sharp twangs, her hands imbrued in blood, holding a bloody Dagger in one hand, in the other a burning Flambo; with which Instruments she would seize on, or destroy, not only Learning, but her Habitations, but is prevented and overcome by an Herculan Genius, or Power.

Next that, brutish scoffing Ignorance, that endeavoureth to vilify & contemn what it understandeth not, represented by a Satyr, which is charmed by a Mercurial Genius with her Caduceus.

OXFORD.

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